

TOWN OF LUNENBURG

Office of the Planning Board

Matthew Brenner *Chair*
Timothy Willsmer *Vice Chair*
Amanda Reid *Clerk*
Matthew Allison *Member*
Glenn McLeod *Member*



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Christopher Reilly – Land Use Director
Logan O'Connell – Admin Asst.

MINUTES

2024-11-25

MEETING POSTED: [Yes](#)

ADDRESS: Town Hall – 17 Main St, Lunenburg, MA 01462

TIME: 6:00 P.M.

PRESENT: Matthew Brenner (Chair), Timothy Willsmer (Vice Chair), Amanda Reid (Clerk),
Matthew Allison, Glenn McLeod

ABSENT: None

CALL TO ORDER / PLEDGE

Matthew Brenner called the meeting to order at 6:02 P.M. The pledge of allegiance was led by **Matthew Allison**.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None at this time.

CHAIR / DIRECTOR'S REPORTⁱ

C. Reilly congratulated the Board on their successful Warrant Article to update the Water Supply Protection District (§ 250-4.9). **M. Brenner** thanked the public for their extensive engagement in finding an agreeable bylaw.

Per C. Reilly, the Marshall Park project has been postponed indefinitely. Its Site Plan Approval and Stormwater Application may arrive sometime in Spring.

The final Master Plan Steering Committee meeting is 2024-12-04, and the final survey is available at PLANLUNENBURG.ORG.

APPROVAL NOT REQUIRED PLANS

100 Townsend Harbor Rd

Mark Wheeler of Tauper Land Survey presented on behalf of applicants Steven R. Stafford & Peter M. Stafford. Planⁱⁱ divides one property into five lots (three standard and two reduced frontage). **C. Reilly** confirmed the plan met statutory requirements for endorsement.

T. Willsmer moved to endorse the ANR. A Reid seconded.

Voice vote, passed unanimously.

Goodrich St & Reservoir Rd Lots 1-6

Chris Anderson of Hannigan Engineering presented on behalf of applicant John Keating. Planⁱⁱⁱ creates 6 lots: lots 1-5 are Residential B compliant, lot 6 is remaining land of approximately 88 acres. Most lots have around 200 ft. of frontage.

C. Reilly confirmed the plan met statutory requirements for endorsement despite the “pork-chopping” of the lots.

M. Brenner asked if the steep contours were “illusory frontage”, **C. Anderson** confirmed they weren’t. **M. Allison** suggested connecting the 5 lots via a single common driveway but acknowledged it was beyond the scope of ANR endorsement.

T. Willsmer moved to endorse. A. Reid seconded.

Voice vote, passed unanimously.

T. Willsmer asked about available methods of encouraging Common Driveways. **M. Brenner** cited the new Common Driveway bylaw & said “our encouragement is that it’s cheaper and easier”. **C. Reilly** noted that common driveways aren’t eligible for Town ownership like roads in a subdivision.

32 Spring St

Greg Roy of Dillis & Roy presented on behalf of applicant Caroline Elizabeth Griffis Living Trust.

Plan^{iv} proposes no new buildable lots, creates “parcel A”, which houses the septic system for the house across the street, out of parent parcel. Purpose is to *avoid* conveying it with Lot 1, prevent a common easement issue in lake communities.

Existing leaching field on parcel A. D&R has done additional soil testing display a reserve leaching field, got Title V inspection. Also tested soil on Lot 1, designed a septic system for it that has been approved by the Board of Health.

Parcel A is *not* to be a buildable lot, Lot 1 has adequate frontage. House would have to “sit quite a bit back from the road” to achieve the 175 ft lot width, but that is an option.

M. Brenner asked about requirements of septic systems under public roads. **G. Roy** didn’t permit this, but said generally requires a license from the Select Board or an easement issued by Town Meeting, and a Title V variance.

T. Willsmer moved to endorse. A. Reid seconded.

Voice vote, passed unanimously.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

494 Electric Ave – SPA, SMP (cont. from 2024-10-28)

Chris Anderson presented on behalf of applicant D&A Lunenburg, LLC. Hasn't made any formal modifications to the Site Plans yet (awaiting feedback from peer reviewer Graves Engineering).

Jeff Avini presented updates on ownership dispute of Pierce Ave, hasn’t heard back from Town Counsel yet & will circle back after Town Meeting. **C. Reilly** confirmed he forwarded all contact information and materials from applicant to Town Counsel about 3-4 weeks ago, will reach out again. **J. Avini** noted Unitol did come out & reposition some lights.

C. Reilly updated status of peer review, comments from GEI are close to completion. Recommended continuance to 2024-12-09.

Public Comment:

Dave MacDonald (155 Island Rd) emphasized the adverse impact of procedural delays on small businesses in Town. Has background as a small business owner & served on Boards in Town. Opined procedural delays cost the business owners money, which in turn costs the Town money. Noted difficulty of running a restaurant today, wants to help applicants follow the law.

Michael Lovewell (579 Reservoir Rd) agreed with D. MacDonald. Has been business owner in Town for 40 years, was part of the CVS project & helped the Town by lending it as a staging area for the Phase 1 sewer project. Acknowledged efforts to simplify Town processes but emphasized need for commercial development in Lunenburg.

Ryan Stober (Pierce Ave) asked about ownership dispute of Pierce Ave: what is the intention of the applicants & what would be allowed depending on its adoption or non-adoption by the Town?

M. Brenner explained – applicants contend the Town never finished the formal process of taking the road, which lets them better leverage the current parking bylaws for their business.

Per **J. Avini** the applicants did “title abstract” tracing the chain of ownership back & their examiner found that Pierce Ave’s taking was never recorded with the Registry of Deeds despite a Town vote to take it. He emphasized that the applicants do *not* want to own the road, but it’s a method to join the parcels to create compliant parking. **R. Silver** asked if combining the parking would create a dead end. **M. Brenner** explained that per the plans they’ve submitted, it would instead be “overflow parking” across the street.

D. MacDonald cited the Old Mill in Westminster as a business with parking on both sides of the street.

A. Reid asked about getting info from Westminster about facilitating this.

M. Brenner noted Lunenburg’s parking bylaw explicitly requires parking to be on the same lot as the business *except* for the Village Center district. Opined our parking bylaw is “conservative” due to previously dangerous parking situations where businesses didn’t provide enough parking, leading to on-street parking in dangerous areas. Explained connection to this application – by owning the road it, applicant can consider the site be “one lot” and have parking on both sides under current parking bylaw.

T. Willsmer moved to continue the public hearing for 494 Electric Ave to 12-09 at 6:05 P.M.

A. Reid seconded.

Voice vote, passed unanimously.

791 Leominster Rd – SMP (cont. from 2024-10-28)

Continued to 12-09 per applicant request.

795 Leominster Rd – SMP (cont. from 2024-10-28)

Continued to 12-09 per applicant request.

70 Kilburn St – SMP (cont. from 2024-10-28)

Continued to 12-09 per applicant request.

DECISIONS

1260 Reservoir Rd

The decision^y available before the Board had scrivener's errors and didn't explicitly include the Board's "standard conditions". The Board wanted to track down their standard conditions and verify that the decision included the standard conditions, especially the limits on construction hours.

C. Reilly clarified that to avoid delays, the applicant would be able to proceed at their own risk despite the decision not being available.

ABUTTING COMMUNITY NOTICES

Notices included a multi-family conversion & a Planned Unit Development in Fitchburg, and a UPS Store in Townsend. No local impact.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Master Plan Steering Committee

Per **T. Willsmer**, continuing issues reaching a quorum. Town "get-together" is on December 4th. **M. Allison** asked whether the Master Plan Consultant's contract (Over Under, Inc) included hosting a specific number of public meetings. **M. Brenner** didn't know. **C. Reilly** noted the Master Plan was nearing completion, but he hasn't been able to get a copy of the contract.

Open Space Committee

Per **G. McLeod** – nothing to report.

Municipal Bldg. Design Committee

Per **M. Allison** – has a meeting scheduled in hopes to get ARPA money under contract. Over 20 responses to RFP, but only one on-time response. Personally unhappy they "had to" hire an applicant if they check all the "geometric boxes", but was happy with the one applicant after an interview with the team.

Attended portion of MBDC meeting tonight to review the space requirements from a previous contractor for the Building Design space analysis of the different Town offices. Price slightly over initial goal but members were resoundingly pleased with interview.

Capital Planning Committee

Per **M. Brenner** – has heard from all entities submitting capital requests and seen their 10 year plans. Wanted unified presentation styles this year but that is taking time to percolate out.

First round of capital rankings unavailable due to lost meeting (Veterans' day holiday). Will be doing more of the 5-year capital plan after the new year once we've submitted the current rankings.

Economic Development Committee

Per **G. McLeod** – Nothing to report, last week's meeting rescheduled to 12-19.

Storm Water Task Force

Per **T. Willsmer** – making progress. Goal to start advertising by Spring Meeting (creating outline so people can start talking about it). Will likely need a "Stormwater Commission" for ongoing work (similar to the Sewer Commission), currently investigating that. Working with CEI (engineering firm) to get information about costs, charges to businesses, etc.

Montachusett Regional Planning Commission

A. Reid – Nothing to report.

Montachusett Joint Transportation Committee

A. Reid – Did not meet this month, nothing to report.

Town Manager Screening Committee

Per **M. Brenner** – Ad went out, we’ve received applications & chosen who the committee will interview. Interviews scheduled for coming weeks; committee will then pass on some number of applicants to the Select Board for their review. Personally happy with quality of applicants.

G. McLeod asked about the number of applicants and general response. **M. Brenner** wanted more applicants but opined we have an acceptable number of appropriate quality available.

M. Allison asked about the integration of the third-party staffing agency assisting the TMSC and questioned its benefits. **M. Brenner** explained – Community Paradigm Associates (CPA) was hired. They created a “position statement” for the Town that was included in the job listing after collecting info from the TMSC, Select Board, and Department Heads to get an understanding of Lunenburg. Applicants respond directly to them when applying, and TMSC then chooses from those applicants with additional feedback from CPA. Opined they’re better at filtering candidates and advertising the position than the Town alone would be.

MINUTES APPROVAL

T. Willsmer moved to approve the minutes for 2024-09-09 and 2024-09-23. A. Reid seconded.
Voice vote, passed unanimously.

MEETING SCHEDULE

Upcoming meeting is **2024-12-09** at 6:00 P.M. Not meeting on 12-23 due to holidays.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None at this time.

BOARD COMMENT / CONCERNS

MBTA Communities Act

G. McLeod noted a decision from the State Supreme Court on the town of Milton’s lawsuit expected early February.

The Board discussed the scenario of failing to pass compliant zoning through Special Town Meeting. Consequences would include ineligibility for a list of grants which is evolving over time. **C. Reilly** noted that grant applications could still be made assuming Lunenburg was compliant by the next Town Meeting.

M. Brenner emphasized concern about “punitive measures” over incentives. **G. McLeod** opined the Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities was exceeding the definition of “guidelines”, which aren’t subjected to the implementation checks used in “regulations”. **M. Brenner** confirmed that the Board wants to have MBTA Communities Act materials ready before implementation of the Master Plan.

ADJOURNMENT

T. Willsmer moved to adjourn. A. Reid seconded.

Voice vote, passed unanimously. Adjourned 7:36 P.M.

Minutes by Logan O'Connell, Admin Asst.

DOCUMENTS REFERENCED

ⁱ Staff Report, 2024-11-25

ⁱⁱ 100 Townsend Harbor Rd – ANR Plan

ⁱⁱⁱ Goodrich St & Reservoir RD Lots 1-6 – ANR Plan

^{iv} 32 Spring St – ANR Plan

^v 1260 Reservoir Rd – Initial Decision